



Family Caregiver

Sharing Information & Giving Support to Hawai'i's Family Caregivers

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"The Gym" Works Out for Active Mom

by Rosemary Blair, Caregiver

My Mom is 118 pounds of pure determination. She stands almost five feet tall, that is, when she is standing straight. She is 90 years old. She is really a funny lady, much like Gracie Allen, George Burns' comedy partner from years ago.

In retrospect, I'm sure my Mom had what is called "early onset" Alzheimer's disease beginning in her late 40s. I was around eight-years-old and remember her bragging that I was so smart because I knew my phone number; she would proclaim that she didn't even know it. This really frightened me since I was aware that all of my friends knew their own phone numbers.

About this same time, she had major surgery; the doctors discharged her within two days as she was disrupting the entire ward. She was totally disoriented and screaming constantly because she thought her home had been turned into a hospital and that she was a prisoner. At that time, the doctor's called it "sundowner's syndrome."

There were many ups and downs during the next thirty years, but Mom managed to live alone until 2001. She was a disaster waiting to happen. Mom would light her gas stove in the morning and not turn it all the way off. The neighbors were concerned that she would cause a major fire, and justifiably so. In April 2001, she had a bad fall and ended up in a



Rosemary Blair's mom relaxes at "The Gym."

nursing home. After two months, a family friend informed me that my Mom's health was failing. She was on tranquilizers, had no interest in eating or living, had lost 30 pounds, was in a wheelchair and was completely incoherent. Panicked, I flew from our home on Maui to California, where she was living. You can imagine the heartbreak, the guilt and hopelessness I felt. I was at a loss. It was obvious she would soon be dead if circumstances didn't change—and fast. I spent hours searching for a place that would take Alzheimer's patients and that was affordable. Finally, I called my husband, crying, and told him I couldn't leave her and had to bring her back to Maui. Fortunately, my husband was very understanding, and he agreed.

Once my husband agreed to have her join us, I started researching resources on Maui. Maui Adult Day Care Center was mentioned to me several times. During my initial call, staff answered my many questions, and explained that the Center offered a safe, stimulating environment for clients suffering from dementia. After speaking with staff I immediately began to feel my hopelessness lifting, and within 3 days of our arrival on Maui, she was admitted to the Day Care Center, or as I refer to it, "The Gym." We had no choice but to call it "The Gym" because my Mom was never taken care of and she hated strangers, so



Mom with granddaughter Bonnie.

anything social was out. Fortunately, she was willing to try "The Gym."

Everyone at "The Gym" was a saint. They understood that she needed to believe she was still in California at a gym, and staff just played along with

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Upcoming & etc...

Caregiver Conferences

These conferences offer practical, up-to-date resources, information and skills to help care for a loved one. Dynamic speakers from a variety of disciplines will share their expertise and knowledge. Please refer to the County Corner column for more information about caregiver conferences in your community.

KAUAI

Wednesday, August 10, 2005
Masters Room of Kauai Lagoons Terrace Restaurant
Call the Kauai Agency on Elderly Affairs at 241-4470 to register.

HILo

Thursday, August 11, 2005
Hilo Naniloa Resort
Call the Hawaii County Office of Aging at 327-3597 to register.

HONOLULU

Saturday, August 27, 2005
Sheraton Waikiki Hotel
Call the Senior Hotline at 523-4545 or visit www.elderlyaffairs.com to register.

MAUI

Saturday, November 19, 2005
Save the Date!

KONA

Wednesday, November 30, 2005
Save the Date!

Come Play Bingo

Begins July 18, 2005 on KFVE (K5)
5 nights a week for 6 weeks
Mondays - Thursdays at 6:58 pm and
Fridays at 6:30 pm
Hosted by Frank DeLima, the six-week
"Come Play Bingo" will be aired in conjunction with a community-based program at local senior centers. The show was developed to provide activities and educational information for Hawaii's kupuna.

Kupuna Connections

Wednesdays, 7:30 pm
Channel 52, Olelo Community TV

Neighbor island viewers should

check Cable Community Access Channels for dates and times:
Channel 52: Kauai's Ho'ike
Channel 53: Maui's Akaku
Channel 27: Big Island's Na Leo
Kupuna Connections is the only TV series dedicated to Hawaii's seniors and their families! Co-hosted by Dr. Cullen Hayashida and Percy Ihara, CSA, Kupuna Connections is broadcasted every week. Topics discussed to date include: Hawaii's prescription drug programs; scams/fraud against seniors; financial security/wellness; homecare/care homes; long-term care insurance; Medicare/Medicaid; and health awareness. Call 368-6747 (O'ahu) or 866-369-6747 (toll-free) to suggest topics that you would like to see.

Fall Prevention Conference

October 4, 2005
8:30 am to 4:30 pm
Pacific Beach Hotel (Waikiki)
The Injury Prevention Program and Neurotrauma section of the Department of Health are hosting this Fall Prevention Conference. This year's focus will be on home safety; modification and retrofitting; and elder design to allow for the best possible quality of life and the greatest independence for the elderly.

Rosemary Bakker, gerontologist and certified interior designer, a Research Associate in Gerontologic Design and Medicine at the Weill Medical College of Cornell University,

will be the keynote speaker. Ms. Bakker will also moderate a panel on Reducing Falls by Design. In addition, a wide variety of breakout sessions will cover topics such as assistive devices, exercise, medications, balance issues, nutrition, family caregiving and patient handling skills.

Please call the Kapiolani Community College Continuing Education Coordinator at 734-9138 for more information or to register.



E LOA KE OLA



MAY LIFE
BE LONG

The Executive Office of Aging is the state agency whose mission is to promote dignity and independence of older adults, and to help prepare for the rapid expansion of Hawaii's aging population.

Phone: 808-586-0100
www4.hawaii.gov/eoa

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Caregiver Resource Initiative
Project Coordinator



We provide access to our activities without regard to race, color, national origin (including language), age, sex, religion, or disability. Write or call EOA or the DOH Affirmative Action Officer at Box 2278, Honolulu, HI 96801 or at 808-586-4616 (voice/tty) within 180 days of a problem.

Where Do I Start?

The best place to start in getting information on caregiver services in your community is your county office on aging. They can be reached at the following numbers:

Honolulu Elderly Affairs Division
523-4545

Kauai Agency on Elderly Affairs
241-4470

Maui County Office on Aging
270-7755

Hawaii County Office on Aging
961-8600 (Hilo)
327-3597 (Kona)

Self-Care For Caregivers: There's A Brighter Side

by Keoni Kealoha O. Devereaux, Jr., PhD,
Vice President of Programs, Alzheimer's
Association-Aloha Chapter

When you find yourself responsible for the care of a person with dementia, taking care of yourself may be the last thing on your mind. There's so much to be done, including learning about caregiving and dementia and schooling yourself to pay constant attention.

Caregivers can't afford *not* to take time for themselves. Even if it seems to run against common sense, taking time for you is crucial.

Most self-care lists begin with something like this: consult your doctor regularly and follow his or her advice. This make sense! All too often, caregivers themselves fall ill and even die. Should you become ill, it means that you won't be able to fulfill your role as caregiver. You may need care yourself, putting further stress on a family whose resources are already taxed.

Another priority is screening for depression. Some studies show that more than half of all caregivers caring for a person with dementia are depressed. Ask to be screened and accept treatment if you are depressed.

So what's the brighter side of self-care? Simply put, it means treating yourself as someone who deserves to be loved, cherished and supported in your search for meaning. Some caregivers feel so overwhelmed they have to start small. If they can just set aside two hours a week for themselves, they're off to a great start. Finding respite to give you the actual time off can be a challenge. Some people have lost touch with the ideas and activities that have always brought them joy.

So go easy. Spend two hours with a close friend who shares similar interests. Go for a walk. Go to lunch. If you share a hobby, go to your favorite shop and daydream about a project. Sometimes people just can't get their minds off of caregiving. If that's the case, call the Alzheimer's Association - Aloha Chapter office at

808-591-2771 and ask us to send you the brochure called "Caregiver Stress: Signs to Watch For...Steps To Take."

When you receive the brochure, share it with a close friend or relative, someone you trust to be honest and gentle with you. Ask them to speak to you if they notice your signs of stress are increasing. If that happens, they should ask you to talk about your feelings and stresses. That will do far more to ease your stress than listening to advice. This is a small start.

Finally, a word about guilt — almost every caregiver feels it now



Keoni Kealoha O.
Devereaux, Jr.

and then. Guilt plagues some caregivers; they worry that they aren't doing enough or that they aren't doing it right. They feel that if their love were more complete, they would never feel cross or too exhausted to help. This kind of guilt can be your worst enemy, eroding your health and peace of mind.

How can you confront it? First, don't compare yourself to others. You have to find your own way of caring. Second, give yourself credit for what you have accomplished. Third, talk about your feelings. Our caregiver support groups offer a secure setting for such talk. In these meetings, people help each other set realistic limits based on the long-term reality of caring for a person with dementia.

Should you have any questions about self-care, please call the Alzheimer's Association - Aloha Chapter at 808-591-2771.

"The Gym" Works Out for Active Mom

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her. She soon started feeling her usual funny, hyper self. However, she required one-on-one attention as she was always on the go and staff was concerned that she might fall. There was even some talk that she might have to leave the Center. However, they agreed to wait a few weeks. During this time, staff also explained how to deal with dementia behaviors, suggesting ideas and providing me with reading materials.

What Mom needed most was consistency, routine, and stimulation. And that is exactly what Maui Adult Day Care Center provided her. Knowing that my Mom is well taken care of provides us with peace of mind.

She goes to "The Gym" six days a week. Without "The Gym," I wouldn't be able to work, my support system would be limited and Mom wouldn't have the physical exercise, mental stimulation and social interaction she needs to feel connected to a world that is continually slipping

away from her.

I would like to invite all of you reading this article to take 15 minutes some weekday morning to drop in and experience first hand the warm, loving and caring environment that is the heart and soul of Maui Adult Day Care Center. You will leave with love in your heart and a positive attitude. "The Gym" has helped our family reap many rewards from an otherwise devastating experience. We've learned to live in my Mom's world and to enter her reality as much as possible.

A funny incident happened recently. My daughter Bonnie took a photo of her Grandma and shared it with her. My Mom studied it and was totally silent. Perplexed, Bonnie asked what she thought of it. My Mom slowly looked apologetically at me and responded, "Well, Rosemary, you look so old in this picture." It was hard to contain our laughter. She utters a few gems like this almost daily.

We've learned that she does enjoy life one moment at a time, even if she can't remember the previous moment. We continue to try to enter into that world with her.



H O N O L U L U

Caregiver Education & Training in Central O'ahu & the N. Shore

ORI Anuenue Hale (OAH), the sister agency of Opportunities for the Retarded, Inc., joined the Elderly Affairs Division network of service providers. Karen Miyake, County Executive on Aging, recently announced that OAH will provide education and training sessions to caregivers who are caring for older family members 60 years and older. The program will begin July 1, 2005, and will specifically target caregivers in Central O'ahu and the North Shore areas. The sessions will consist of various topics designed to assist caregivers with their caregiving tasks and to cope with the stresses of long-term caregiving.

If you are a caregiver or know someone who would benefit from these hands-on training sessions, call Yvonne de Luna, Program Director, at 622-3929 for more information. OAH is located at 64-1510 Kamehameha Highway in Wahiawa.

Caregiver services and programs that are continuing for FY 2006 include:

- Alzheimer's Association-Aloha Chapter: 591-2771
 - Child and Family Service Ohana Care: 543-8468
 - Franciscan Adult Day Care C.A.R.E. Club: 988-5678
 - Hawai'i Family Services: 696-3482
 - Kokua Kalihi Valley's Elderly Program: 848-0977
 - Project Dana Caring for the Caregiver: 945-3736.
 - University of Hawai'i Elder Law Project: 956-6544
 - Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center: 456-4490
-

Caregiver's Conference Saturday, August 27, 2005 Sheraton Waikiki Hotel

Honolulu's Caregiver Conference, "Caring for Yourself, Caring for Others" is for you if:

- You are concerned about an older family member, neighbor or friend who is declining in health;
- You help an elderly person with meals, transportation, housework or other tasks; or
- You want to learn about services to help elderly persons and caregivers.

The conference will offer sixteen sessions all designed to provide family caregivers practical, up-to-date resources and skills to help with their particular situations. Dynamic speakers in the field of aging, social work, health care, pharmacy and law will share their expertise and knowledge. The keynote speaker will be Kalani Brady, MD. There will also be a Resource Fair with information about local resources, displays of products and helpful tips and tools to assist caregivers at home. Massages and other self-care activities will be offered on a first-come, first-serve basis and door prizes will be given away at the closing general session.

Pre-registration is required. Call the Senior Hotline at 523-4545 for a registration form or download the form at www.elderlyaffairs.com. Scholarships are available.

H A W A I ' I

Alzheimer's Caregivers

With over 2,000 people suffering from Alzheimer's disease on the Island of Hawai'i it is inevitable that many people in the community will provide care for someone with Alzheimer's or dementia. Many individuals and families are unaware of Alzheimer's disease and related dementias. Symptoms and behaviors are often ignored and not taken seriously, which often leaves families in stressful and confusing dilemmas. This disease is the most common cause of dementia, affecting 10 percent of people over 65 years old and close to 50 percent of those 85 and older. It is essential that

our community seek the education and support they need to help those who are suffering from this disease.

The Alzheimer's Association – Aloha Chapter in Hawai'i County is a non-profit organization that provides services and resources to those in need, and education and awareness to the community. One-on-one private consultations are available, as well as referrals and easy access to our video and book library. Each month there is a variety of workshops and support groups that are available for not only caregivers but also to anyone who is interested in receiving education and assistance.

Each year, the Alzheimer's Association sponsors an Early Signs Health Fair that allows the community to take advantage of free health services and education. Mark your calendars for the 7th Annual Early Signs Health Fair at Life Care Center of Hilo on September 10th, 2005. The Alzheimer's Association also sponsors the Memory Walk every year to help raise funds to provide services for families and individuals dealing with Alzheimer's disease. This year's 10th Annual Memory Walk in Hilo will take place on September 24, 2005 at the Prince Kuhio Plaza. Kona will hold its 2nd Annual Memory Walk on October 29, 2005 at the Keauhou Shopping Center.

For more information, call the Alzheimer's Association – Aloha Chapter, Hawai'i County at 981-2111.

Caregiver's Conference Thursday, August 11, 2005 Hilo Naniloa Resort

The Hilo's Caregiver's Conference, "Caring for Family, Caring for Yourself," offers 12 sessions designed for family caregivers during the day. Participants may choose the three sessions that will be most helpful for their situation. A Resource Fair will be open from 7:30 am to noon. Exhibit staff will be available with information about local services and products, as well as helpful tips and tools to assist caregivers at home. Medication Counseling will be available from 7:30 to 8:30 am. Bring all of your medications—over the counter and prescription drugs, vitamins, herbs and supplements—and partici-

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I Am a Caregiver, For My Role Defines Me

The following remarks were re-printed with permission by Lani Nedbalek, co-founder and co-facilitator of the Central O'ahu Caregiver's Support Group. Lani addressed the guests at a Thank You Reception on May 6, 2005. Organized by the Hawai'i Caregiver Coalition, the purpose of the reception was to show appreciation to Legislators for supporting legislation that enhanced the quality of life of Hawai'i's family caregivers.

"My name is Lani Nedbalek. For almost nine years, I have been a facilitator with the Central O'ahu Caregivers' Support Group. For the past 10 years, I have been a family caregiver—first for my father, then for my father-in-law, and throughout that period for my mother. When people who I haven't seen for a while ask me, "What are you doing now?" I answer that I am a caregiver because the role defines my life.

I am truly honored that I could be here today for two reasons. First, [I wish] to be able to express the gratitude I feel, the gratitude that many caregivers feel for the attention, effort and support given to us by legislators this year—for the caregiver-related bills passed and almost passed, and for the recognition that you have given to the issue of caring for others. It's an important issue. We all know that, not just for us, but for the elders receiving care now and for the younger generation ahead.

The chance to speak today also gives me the opportunity to acknowledge the efforts of the Executive Office on Aging and its Caregiver Resource Initiatives Project, and the invaluable work of Wes Lum. What has the Project done for us? It has given us a better picture—a bigger picture—revealing that caregivers sprinkled throughout all of our communities add up to huge numbers, growing numbers statewide, numbers that will pose major issues for generations to come. Through the Project, caregivers have been able to network, to organize and to unite in a coalition of shared goals and higher purpose.

Ten years ago, when I first became

a caregiver, the Project didn't exist. The issues that surround me now were not a part of my life. Like many other caregivers, I was totally unprepared for the role; it happened so suddenly. I'm an only child. When my



Lani Nedbalek speaks at a thank you reception for state legislators.

parents both unexpectedly needed 24-hour care, they moved in with me. I closed my business and withdrew from my community activities. Caring for two frail adults consumed all aspects of my life. They both needed someone constantly. I didn't know what resources were available. I didn't know who to ask or even what to ask.

When Representative Marilyn Lee suggested we start an area caregivers' support group, I jumped at the opportunity. That was nine years ago. I've come a long way since that first year. It wasn't easy; it's still not easy, but being part of a community of caregivers helps a lot. At our monthly caregiver meetings, just like with other support groups in the state, attendance includes grandparents, some in their 80s and 90s, caring for each other and caring for adult children and grandchildren. Younger adults such as sons and daughters as well as retirees attend, all caring for family members.

Despite our differences, we share a special bond of understanding. We understand the desperation we hear, we understand the tears we see, we understand the stories of exhaustion, worry and stress. We understand that it takes a lot to express these stories to others because it's often such a

private matter. These issues include concerns about the family, finances, emotional and mental status, and generational and cultural differences.

Representative Lee now serves as our group's president. Representative Marcus Oshiro is on our advisory committee, along with social workers, doctors and many people who share their time and knowledge with us.

Yes, we've moved ahead in recent years. But I know there is still much to do. Our turn to be cared for is next. Who will care for us? Will the next generation of sons and daughters say, "Caregiving defines our lives"? We must continue working together to prevent that from happening."



Senator Norman Sakamoto with representatives of HSTA-R and HARA.

County Corner

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pate in a private consultation with a local pharmacist to avoid the danger of potential adverse reactions.

Pre-registration is required. Call the Hawai'i County Office of Aging at 327-3597 for a registration form. Scholarships are available.

MAUI

Caregiver Survey

Hi'i Na Kupuna o Maui, Maui's caregiver coalition, will take its Caregiver Survey to family and caregivers. The results of the survey will allow the coalition to further its plans to offer support groups for grandparents raising grandchildren.

Hi'i Na Kupuna launched this

(Continued on page 7.)

Caregiver Legislation: A Recap of the 2005 Regular Session

To fully engage our advocacy role in caregiver-related policy issues, the Executive Office on Aging relies on your knowledge, experience and perspectives to help prepare for and participate in the legislative process. As such, we report here on the measures of the 2005 Legislative Session that affect Hawai'i's caregiving community. It is our hope that the information will assist you in making a full and objective assessment of the 2005 Regular Session.

Legislation that passed the 2005 Regular Session:

1. Caregiver Consent for Health-care.

Authorizes a minor's caregiver to consent to health care services for the minor (S.B. No. 40).

2. Expanded Chore Services.

Appropriates funds for chore service programs to support and expand the level of chore services for Hawai'i's elderly and disabled (S.B. No. 1620).

3. Senior Centers. Appropriates funds for the Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center, the senior center at Moiliili Community Center and the senior support program at the Waiki Community Center (S.B. No. 1620).

4. Federal Housing Assistance for Grandparents Raising Grandchildren. Urges federal housing assistance for grandparent and relative-headed households (S.C.R. No. 21).

5. Aging in Place in Condominiums. Convenes a Task Force to facilitate the establishment of viable naturally occurring retirement communities (S.C.R. No. 79).

6. Recognition of Family Caregivers. Urges the State to recognize the importance of the contributions of family caregivers and to support them to the extent possible in serving the long-term care needs of the State's residents (H.C.R. No. 95).

7. DOH/DHS to Support Family



Caregivers. Urges the Departments of Health and Human Services to develop methods to support family caregivers who provide at-home care to qualified relatives (H.C.R. No. 96).

Proposals that did not pass (but were scheduled for public hearings):

1. LTC Resource Initiative Program. Establishes a Long-Term Care Resource Initiative Program at Kapiolani Community College (S.B. No. 244).

2. Caregiver Coordinator. Establishes a Caregiver Coordinator position in EOA (S.B. No. 561).

3. Legitimizing Caregivers in Hawai'i Revised Statutes. Requires DOH to provide caregiver support services within its limited resources (S.B. No. 562/S.B. No. 1211/H.B. No. 1044).

4. State Objective. Makes it a state objective to recognize the importance of the contributions of family caregivers and to support them, to the extent possible, in serving the long-term care needs of the State's residents (S.B. No. 872/H.B. No. 1252).

5. Kaua'i Demonstration Project. Creates a demonstration project to reimburse at-home, long-term family

caregivers to functionally dependent or cognitively impaired relatives on Kaua'i from 2006 to 2009 (S.B. No. 485/H.B. No. 248).

6. Caregiver Reimbursements.

Appropriates funds to DOH and DHS to reimburse family caregivers who provide at-home care to qualified relatives (S.B. No. 864/H.B. No. 1249).

7. Caregiver Tax Credit. Establishes a Caregiver Tax Credit (S.B. No. 865/H.B. No. 1251; H.B. No. 272).

8. Expanded Caregiver Services.

Appropriates funds to EOA for the expansion of elder programs and services, including caregiver support services (S.B. No. 560).

9. Affordable Housing. Establishes state policy to develop and provide affordable housing for grandparent-headed families (S.B. No. 1198).



10. Family Friendly Policies. Urges employers to implement flexible benefit plans and other family-friendly policies for public and private sector employees (S.C.R. No. 5/S.R. No. 3/H.C.R. No. 13/H.R. No. 17).

11. Work-Family Task Force.

Requests the Governor to convene a Work-Family Task Force to review Hawai'i's work-family laws and policies, and requests the Legislative Reference Bureau to study other states' laws and practices that promote good work-family policy (S.C.R. No. 60).



Tutu's Corner

Ka Lei Mehana O Na Kupuna Event Planned for Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

Kupuna raising keiki will have an opportunity to attend a conference to learn about community resources that can help them with their unique challenges. The conference, titled, "Ka Lei Mehana O Na Kupuna,"

**HAWAII HAS OVER 14,000
GRANDPARENTS SERVING
AS A PRIMARY CAREGIVER
FOR GRANDCHILDREN.**

which translates into "the lei of warmth of the kupuna," is the result of efforts by more than a dozen community organizations spearheaded by Hawai'i Family Services and AARP Hawai'i. The conference will be held on September 15, 2005, from 8:30 am to 1:30 pm at the Makaha Resort in Waianae.

"Hawai'i has over 14,000 grandparents serving as a primary caregiver for grandchildren," said Dixie Padello, Director of Hawai'i Family Services, "Those of us living in Waianae know that many of these grandparents are our friends and neighbors, and we wanted to figure out a way to help them."

The resulting event, which is free to all kupuna raising keiki, will feature a keynote speech by John Kaimikaua, Kumu Hula, Historian of Moloka'i Chant and Dance, and Instructor at Hawai'i Pacific University. He is a grandparent who is raising his grandchild and will address the



Auntie Rosie DeMello and her grandchild, Brianne Rodrigues attend the Tutu Support Group through Hawai'i Family Services.

tradition and honor of grandparents caring for grandchildren in Hawai'i. Kaimikaua will be followed by State Representative and Legal Aide attorney Maile Shimabukuro, who will talk about legal rights for grandparents raising grandchildren. After a short break, participants will hear from panelists representing organizations with resources to help—including drug prevention and intervention, education, child care and

more. At lunch, the panelists will be spread out among the tables and kupuna will have an opportunity to carry their box lunches to whichever table houses a person from whom they would like more information. "AARP research shows that many grandparent caregivers do not know about services or programs that are available to them," said Jackie McCarter, Associate State Director of AARP Hawai'i. "We hope this conference is a first step

in linking them to services that can help them in their situation—and also to each other."

For information about this event or to register, kupuna can contact Hawai'i Family Services at 696-3482.

Fiscal sponsors of this event are: AARP Hawai'i, Alu Like, Elderly Affairs Division of the City and County of Honolulu, Hawai'i Inter-generational Network and the Queen Liliuokalani Children's Center.

County Corner

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Above: Hi'i Na Kupuna o Maui caregiver coalition members. Right: Caregiver Survey.

effort on Wednesday, June 15, 2005. The survey was unveiled, the results of the pre-test were shared



and instructions on how to administer the instrument were discussed. If you would like information about the survey, please call Kaulana Keala at 808-244-3242.

K A U A I

New Kapaa Caregiver Support Group

Beginning June 21, 2005, we will start our first Kapaa Neighborhood Support Group Meeting at the Kapaa Library. Support Group meetings will be held from 10:00 am to 11:30 am on a monthly basis. Please call Neva Olson at 821-8049 for more information.

We are also continuing our Lihue Neighborhood Support Group Meetings, now at the Lihue Neighborhood Center, on the third Wednesday of the month. Summer dates will vary slightly, so please call Neva Olson at 821-8049 for more information.

Newcomers are welcome at these meetings. However, we rec-

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Medicare Part D: As Easy As 1, 2, 3

Medicare Part D is a prescription drug benefit that begins in January 2006. You pay a monthly premium, are responsible for a \$250 deductible and Medicare pays for part of your prescriptions. If your income is less than \$16,515 (\$22,140 for a couple) and have less than \$10,000 in assets (\$20,000 for a couple), you may be eligible for help on some or all of the monthly premium, the \$250 deductible and most of the cost of the prescription.

Beginning in June 2005 and throughout the summer, you are invited to attend a Part D Seminar to get more information and to see if you'll be eligible for help. Call Sage PLUS at 586-7299 (Neighbor Islands: 1-888-875-9229) to find out where the closest Part D seminar is to you. Whether you attend these seminars or not, you'll need to complete the following three steps to get Part D.

Step 1: Apply

Check to see if you can receive help

with the cost of Part D prescription drug coverage by completing an "Application for Help with Medicare Prescription Drug Plan Costs." If you did not get an application in the mail, call 1-800-772-1213 and ask for one to be sent to you. Return it to Social Security in Pennsylvania in the envelope provided. You should do this right away so you will know if you'll receive help when it's time to enroll in Part D in late 2005.

Step 2: Select

In mid-October 2005, contact the Prescription Drug Plans (PDP) to find out what prescriptions each plan carries. You can find out about the PDP in Hawai'i by calling 1-800-MEDICARE, or go online at www.medicare.gov.

Step 3: Enroll

Enroll in Part D beginning November 15, 2005 by contacting the Prescription Drug Plan you selected in Step 2.

If you have any questions, please call Sage PLUS at 586-7299 (Neighbor Islands: 1-888-875-9229).

County Corner

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ommend that you contact Neva prior to attending to let us know you are coming.

Caregiver's Conference

August 10, 2005

Masters Room of

Kaua'i Lagoons Terrace Restaurant

Kaua'i's Caregiver's Conference, "Caring for Family, Caring for Yourself", will offer practical, up-to-date resources, and information and skills to help with the daily challenges of caregiving. Lee White, AARP National Director of State Operations, will share his personal story about keeping things together without falling apart. Participants will also learn about the 3 C's of financial preparedness and tax information, and dietary guidelines for caregivers. A Resource Fair will also be available to provide information about resources and helpful tips.

Please contact the Kaua'i Agency on Elderly Affairs at 241-4470 for a registration form.

E LOA KE OLA



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MAY LIFE BE LONG